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The War and Slavery,

or

Victory only through Emancipation.

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ONLY THROUGH

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VICTORY ONLY THROUGH EMANCIPATION.

It is undeniable that the Southern rebellion is a war for slavery through the overthrow of the Federal Government. Its antecedents, its inception, the speeches and official papers of Davis and Stephens, its history thus far, all show it. Slavery is not only the object of the rebellion, but it is the right arm of its strength. The slaves, by their toil, furnish the sinews of the war the rebels are waging. Without their labor, they could not carry forward their project. The slaves not only till their soil and produce their supplies, but they build their fortifications, strengthen their columns, perform the menial service of their camps, and in a thousand ways contribute to their power, comfort and success. No matter how many men they put into the field, they do not weaken their agricultural force, for the whites do not labor, but almost every man who enters the Northern army is taken from some department of productive labor, and, by so much, diminishes our resources for conducting the war.

If this rebellion, therefore, is to be put down, it will be found necessary to strike the decisive blow at the vulnerable and vital point to be found in the system of slavery. Not only is this necessary to weaken the power of the rebels, but, until it is done, there cannot be that unity, enthusiasm and strength in our own effort that is equal to the task we have in hand to accomplish. There has always been a large class at the North who have believed it to be the duty of the government, at all times, to suppress slavery. To this class, tens of thousands have recently been added, who, while they have had scruples as to the right of the government to do it before, believe it to be both its right and duty to do it now.

They know that whatever protection the slaveholders might claim for their institution while loyal to the Constitution, now that they have *rebelled against that Constitution*, the government is not only absolved from every obligation to protect it, but is bound by its duty to the imperilled nationality — to say nothing here of its duty to the poor slaves themselves — to put an end to the curse and scourge at once and for ever. When, therefore, the government rises to the level of this now almost universal feeling of the people, it will call out that unity of effort and overwhelming enthusiasm that will sweep like an avalanche of power against the rebel forces, and annihilate their strength and scatter them like chaff before the whirlwind, while a mighty phalanx of eight hundred thousand emancipated and able-bodied bondmen would meet them in the rear to finish the glorious victory. But the dallying policy of the government on this subject causes the spirit of the people to flag in the contest, while the moral support of England, France, and other European governments is well nigh lost to our cause, but which a bold and decisive measure of emancipation would fully and effectually secure. Can we hope to succeed in our struggle without evoking the highest type of the heroic endeavor of the people? without calling to our side the moral force of the nations? without rallying the slaves themselves to the standard of the Union and Freedom? If it were possible to gain a bare victory over the rebel forces, and plant our standard once more on our stolen forts and arsenals, and yet leave slavery untouched and the slaveholding oligarchy in possession of its former power, its insolence and domination and the "irrepressible conflict" would still continue, and leave us without any substantial victory or abiding peace, ever and anon to be torn by political convulsions, Kansas raids and slaveholding lynchings and outrages, until the flames of civil war become again enkindled, and we resort once more to the arbitrament of the sword, with this same question confronting us for a settlement. So much for the military and political reasons for emancipation.

But there is other and higher reason to doubt even the temporary success of our arms, while we endeavor to fight rebellion and at the same time preserve *for the rebel South* their darling institution — while we profess to be fighting for

civilization, and yet shield the sternest despotism and the vilest barbarism the world has ever known. That higher reason is found in the fact, that God still governs this world; and he has said, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them, and I will pluck them up and destroy them." He has pledged himself to the cause of the oppressed, to "hear their cry," and to "break in pieces the oppressor." Now, while the Federal Government holds its present attitude on the subject of slavery, it is as really the oppressor as the rebel South, and God will hold us to the responsibility, and cause us to share the penalties of the transgression. The government has admitted the right of slavery in the States; has protected the inter-State slave trade; has assumed the duty of returning fugitives, and has ever held itself ready to quell the efforts of the slaves to throw off their bondage; and even now, its generals, fighting for the government which slavery is seeking to destroy, pledge themselves beforehand to "put down slave insurrections *with an iron hand.*" Now, as before God, though constitutional obligations were piled heaven high, no government could be justified in doing these things, for His authority is supreme for governments as well as for individuals, and the nation that discards this principle and proceeds to acts of tyranny and injustice from a fancied political necessity, is on the high road to destruction, and, without repentance, its doom is inevitable.

The history of all oppressive governments in the past shows that our statement is not the utterance of fanaticism. Where is mighty Babylon, with her "golden cities," her magnificent palaces, her "hanging gardens," and boundless glory and wealth? And where is rich and luxurious Persia, with her "hundred and twenty-seven provinces," stretching "from India over to Ethiopia," and commanding armies of millions? And warlike Greece, famed for her world-wide conquests? And iron-booted and brazen-helmeted Rome, with her millions of slaves, symbolized in the vision of the old prophet by a monster beast, "dreadful and terrible, having great iron teeth, devouring and breaking in pieces, and stamping the residue with his feet," where is she? And

Egypt, with her atheistic King, who said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" and then commanded the bondmen "back to their burdens"—where is she? Where are they all? In the language of another of the old Seers, "They have all gone down to hell with their weapons of war, with their iniquities upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living." And wherefore are they fallen? They were murderous and oppressive governments—"they destroyed their land and slew their people," and according to the decree of the Almighty, He has "swept them with the besom of destruction." And shall the American government, persevering in its oppression of millions of its people, constitute the solitary exception in the history of the world of a nation escaping the just penalty of its deeds? Not till the fixed laws of God are abolished, and His throne shall take the side of the oppressor.

Therefore, though the Constitution should forbid emancipation, it should nevertheless be done. But it does not forbid, it demands it. It was "ordained to establish justice, and secure the blessings of liberty." But apart from this, no one has attempted to deny the right of the government, now in a state of war for its very existence, to abolish slavery as a means of preserving that existence. Neither the President, nor Congress, nor the Judiciary has gainsayed this doctrine. If, therefore, the government fails now to act, where its duty is clear and its right undisputed, it must be from the most cowardly or jesuitical policy, involving the most gratuitous, and, therefore, the wickedest complicity with the crime of slaveholding. We now have an opportunity thrust upon us, in the providence of God—that we may be without the shadow of an excuse for not doing it—to redeem the oath, made eighty-five years ago, that, if God would give us victory over our enemy, we would found a government on the doctrine declared to be "self-evident," that "God has created all men equal, and endowed them with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." I say we made oath to do this, for when we put forth the Declaration and entered upon the struggle to make it good, we "*appealed to the Searcher of hearts for the rectitude of our intentions.*" Not having ful-

filled this pledge, so solemnly made, we stand before God a perjured nation to-day. For eighty-five years we have endeavored to cement the Union with the blood of the slaves, to bind it together by laws for their capture and return to bondage, and to fortify it with compromises, leaving our oath unaccomplished; and the "*Searcher of hearts*" *has seen it.* Now behold the retribution! These bloody sacrifices to the Slave Power have whetted its appetite for dominion and cruelty, and more blood, and now it seeks to satiate itself by slaughtering the very people who have officiated at its altar in these bloody rites; not now to cement the Union, but in diabolical effort to destroy it for ever. If we are not a nation of atheists, how can we hope for success in this war until we free our soul of perjury by "establishing justice and bidding the oppressed go free"? The war, itself, is a retribution for our complicity with slavery. By compromise and concession we have strengthened the Slave Power, and now it demands supreme sovereignty, and lays hold of conspiracy and treason to compass its ends. This is God's law of compensation. We have "sown the wind," and now we "reap the whirlwind."

The loyal souls who take this view of the case, though they mourn over the loss of brave men slaughtered at Big Bethels and Bull Runs, and hide their faces in shame at the defeat and disgrace of our arms, yet they accept it all as a divine chastisement of the nation, and they will expect disaster upon disaster until the National Government, clothed as it is with national responsibilities towards all its subjects, shall "proclaim liberty throughout ALL THE LAND, unto ALL THE INHABITANTS thereof." But instead of doing this, in the very hour of the nation's defeat, disgrace and great calamity, in which the voice of the Almighty seemed as audible as when He spoke in the "tempest and thunderings" of Sinai, Congress proceeds to declare "that the war is not for the overthrow of the institution of any State," meaning thereby slavery. One would have thought that if the bombardment of Sumter, the massacres of Big Bethel and Vienna, and the assassinations of Baltimore, were not enough to prevent further compromises, at least the enemy's cannon of Bull Run and the rebel barbarities of that battle scene would have silenced the voice of concession and called forth stern meas-

ures of retribution against that iniquitous system that had hatched the foul treason into existence and made strong the conspirators for their work of destruction and overthrow.

The rebellion is now so formidable, so defiant, so murderous in its character, that all attempts at conciliation are not only useless, but are actually affording aid and comfort to the foe, and placing the government in the ridiculous posture of exerting itself against its own cause. This is plainly a war of slavery against freedom, of a bloated aristocracy against the equal rights and dignity of the poor and laboring many, and the government should boldly meet the enemy on his own issue, and strike for the freedom of all; restore the national sovereignty wherever the slave oligarchy has caused it to trail in the dust. How long shall we by concessions and half-measures weaken our own cause only to provoke the contempt of our foe? Strike, in the name of God, at his vulnerable point, free the slaves and let them swell the army of freedom, and thus save the lives of our brave men, and prevent the utter bankruptcy of the people, by bringing the war to a speedy and triumphal close. All the blood and treasure that are expended, that emancipation would save, the government is responsible for. Dare it take this responsibility any longer? Had it rather welcome bloody battles, disgraceful and ruinous defeats, and the lamentation and mourning of the people, than to lay its crushing hand upon that accursed thing, named human slavery? If so, God will give us battle, defeat and mourning to our full. North and South will both suffer until the one great object for which God means the war is accomplished — THE FREEDOM OF THE ENSLAVED.

NEW YORK, August 28th, 1861.

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